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NEWS RELEASE

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Dan Whiting (202) 224-8078

Sid Smith (208) 342-7985

SENATE APPROVES MOUNTAIN HOME AFB, GOWEN FIELD PROJECTS

Bill also funds programs for America's veterans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With the Senate back in full swing following the elections, they cleared the first in a long list of appropriations bills still requiring action this year - the Fiscal Year 2007 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill.

Included in the bill are two military construction projects in Idaho:

Family Housing replacement at Mountain Home Air Force Base – This \$107.8 million project will replace 457 units of family housing at the Base. It is Phase 8 of the project. Senator Craig visited the Base in October to tour completed homes from earlier phases.

Railhead Construction at Gowen Field (Phase II) – This \$6.964 million project supports the next stage of the construction of a railhead at Gowen Field. Currently, Gowen Field has no permanent facilities for loading and unloading military vehicles from railcars. Temporary facilities are constructed every year to accommodate units coming to the Gowen Field Training Area for Annual Training. The Railhead will enhance the readiness of units across the nation that conduct Annual Training at Gowen Field's Orchard Training Area by allowing them to ship their vehicles by rail, saving training time and money as compared to other shipping modes.

Idaho Senator Larry Craig commented on the projects, "The housing at Mountain Home is long overdue for replacement. I have been to the Base a number of times to look at both the old and new housing. Let me tell you – this new housing is top-notch. We are treating the families well, and I hope that translates into longer service in our Air Force.

"Additionally, the railhead at Gowen Field is going to save taxpayers money over the long haul and will make our operations there safer."

The bill also includes funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill matches the President's request of \$36.49 billion for discretionary funding and an additional \$28.69 billion for Medical Services.